



Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: May 12, 2021.

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

Minutes.

1. Administration.

Members in Attendance: Dan Amstutz (DPCD), Wayne Chouinard (DPW), Lenard Diggins, Captain Richard Flynn (APD), Ray Jones, Melissa Laube, Howard Muise (Chair), Tycho Nightingale, Scott Smith, Laura Swan, and Shoji Takahashi.

Members Absent: Michael Barry and Jeff Maxtutis.

Members of Public in Attendance: Marcy Beck, Linda Epstein, Jo Anne Preston, Paul Schlichtman, and Petru Sofio.

A. Script for Remotely Conducted Meetings.

The Chair read the script for remotely conducted meetings, referred the members to the agenda attachment entitled “Governor Charles Baker’s 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law,” announced that the meeting was being recorded and reviewed the meeting ground rules.

B. Approval of April 14, 2021, Meeting Notes.

Approval for the Minutes of the April 14, 2021, meeting was deferred to the June 9, 2021, meeting.

C. Correspondence Sent/Received from 04/08/21 to 05/06/21.

Memo on Proposed Study of Park Ave at Appleton St was sent to the Select Board on May 4, 2021, to support the procurement of funds for the analysis of the traffic impacts on Park Ave from a new traffic signal at Park Ave and Appleton St. Town Manager, Adam Chapdelaine, responded by email to confirm

that DPW has sufficient capacity within its existing transportation-related budgets to fund the cost of this proposed study.

D. June Meeting – Election of Officers.

The election of TAC officers occurs at the June Meeting of odd-number years. Scott Smith will be the Chair of the Nomination Committee for the election of officers.

2. Public Comments.

There were no public comments.

3. Town Issues/Activities.

A. Dan Amstutz provided an update from the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).

Minuteman Bikeway: a planning project for the Minuteman Bikeway is funded this fiscal year with CPA funds and will closely involve ABAC. Proposals are due on June 9. The project will seek to address safety of access and entry at various points along the Bikeway, among other goals. This might include studying the potential of lighting parts of the Bikeway and creating “wayside areas” for place-making, rest, and art work. DPCD wants a small selection committee, which will include TAC and ABAC members, to review applications and discuss them with the applicants.

Connect Arlington: Individually met with Select Board members to bring the final plan to the Select Board for endorsement in June.

Pleasant St. Bus-Stop Relocation: plan will be brought to the Select Board for approval at the May 26 meeting.

B. Wayne Chouinard provided an update from the Department of Public Works (DPW):

DPW: completing the move to temporary facilities for the reconstruction of the Grove St. Facility.

Mass Ave/Appleton St/Appleton PI Intersection: depending on weather conditions, traffic cones will be placed to test curb extensions designed to modify the turning radius of westbound vehicles turning from Mass Ave to Appleton St.

C. Captain Richard Flynn provided an update from the Police Department (APD).

Mass Ave/Appleton St/Appleton PI Intersection: APD will assist with the test of curb extensions and left-turn prohibition.

4. Chestnut Street Traffic Calming

Howard Muise provided a draft memorandum on Recommended Chestnut St. Improvements. The goal is to finalize the memo, which TAC will send to the Select Board. A brief summary of the draft recommendations:

1. Repair sidewalk across the Russell Common parking lot.
2. Install advance crosswalk warning signs on both approaches to the crosswalks at Chestnut Terr and Medford St.
3. Install “NO TURN ON RED” (NTOR) sign on the right turn lane from Chestnut St westbound to Mystic St northbound. Several comments were received about this from the listening session and survey.
4. Install curb extensions on both ends of the Chestnut St crosswalks at Chestnut Terr and Medford St. Temporary extensions to-be implemented this year. If successful in improving pedestrian safety, install permanently when Chestnut St is repaved (expected to-be done in 2022).
5. Install a pedestrian center island at Chestnut Terr and Medford St crosswalks. Temporary island to-be implemented this year. If successful in improving pedestrian safety, install permanently when Chestnut St is repaved (expected to-be done in 2022).
6. Install a pedestrian-activated warning signal (such as RRFB) at Chestnut Terr crosswalk. Several comments were received about this from the listening session and survey.
7. Restripe Chestnut St to provide 11-foot travel lanes in each direction; 7-foot parking lanes on each side of Chestnut St with 4-hour parking permitted; 5-foot bicycle lanes on each side; and 2-foot buffer lanes between parking and bicycle lane on each side.
8. Initiate a capital improvement project to study the redesign of Chestnut St and Mystic St intersection.
9. TAC and Town Departments to study Chestnut St and Medford St intersection to determine if a reconfiguration is warranted.

Scott Smith opened the discussion by endorsing the recommendations. He added that the Town should review the traffic light at the intersection of Mystic St and Chestnut St: the push button at the northside does not work, and signal timing should be reassessed to confirm that the functional design report of the Arlington Safe Travel Project has been implemented. Wayne Chouinard confirmed that all parts of the functional design report should have been implemented, and he will look into it tomorrow.

Petri Sofio concurred with Scott Smith's observations on signal phasing; and added that pedestrian signal heads were burnt out. Regarding recommendation #7, he requested parking-protected bicycle lanes be implemented. Howard Muise commented that the specifics of the design are subject to change, and the Memo is worded to provide flexibility to DPW and designers.

Paul Schlichtman praised the recommendations from the comprehensive effort by TAC and hoped that it would be dispatched quickly to the Select Board. He inquired as to when the simple recommendations could be implemented. Wayne Chouinard responded that the new funding year begins on July 1.

Captain Flynn asked for information regarding the Chestnut St and Medford St intersection (recommendation #9), such as traffic flow, truck use, and utilization of the crosswalk at Medford St. Howard Muise responded that a study has not yet been done. Captain Flynn added that the Chestnut Terr crosswalk should be addressed and made safer for pedestrians.

Wayne Chouinard informed TAC that he will provide a separate memo to the Select Board on the Route 60 corridor, which might address some of Captain Flynn's questions. The intersections are challenging to design, in particular the conflict between turning trucks and cyclists (more so than the conflict between trucks and pedestrians). He added that the discussion be focused on pedestrian crossing safety.

Wayne Chouinard said that he has comments on the memo that are truck-related concerns, and he does not agree with retaining the crosswalk at Chestnut Terr or installing an RRFB at Chestnut Terr. To vote for the draft recommendations, it would need to be for a temporary safety study on installing a crosswalk at Chestnut Terr, which might be supported by Officer Rateau. He believes that the safest location to cross is Chestnut St and Medford St. he will abstain from voting on the draft recommendations.

Jo Anne Preston expressed her disappointment at the prospect that the recommendations may be delayed or watered down. She added that she does not know the purpose of the temporary safety study or what it would be measuring. She also emphasized that she would like to see a safe crosswalk at Chestnut Terr. Seniors are not using it currently, because it is dangerous. Marcy Beck concurred with Jo Anne Preston's comments. The Town needs to

accommodate pedestrians in this area as there are seniors, church attendees, and school children, among others.

Scott Smith noted that truck and bus traffic are being addressed for Chestnut St by recommendation #7 which calls for 11-foot travel lanes, the same as provided on Mass Ave. He does not want to delay action.

Len Diggins requested that estimated costs for the intersection studies be provided in the recommendations to help the Select Board make decisions. Importantly, he urged that a single, cohesive message be provided to the Select Board to permit it to act, rather than recommendations from TAC and a separate recommendation from Wayne Chouinard. To this end, he requests that TAC Executive Committee and Wayne Chouinard confer and find a resolution.

Paul Schlichtman stated that recommendations #8 and #9 are aspirational and their implementation would be in the long term. There is urgency to approve the other recommendations and implement them. He suggests that minor changes be made to approve the recommendations and send them to the Select Board.

Shoji Takahashi summarized points of the discussion. Agreeing with statements by Paul Schlichtman and Dan Amstutz, recommendations #1 – 7 are not controversial. The Chestnut Terr crosswalk should remain and be made safe for pedestrians. As TAC has not studied the intersections in depth, recommendations #8 and 9 as drafted might be viewed as controversial.

Shoji Takahashi moved for the TAC to approve the recommendations, subject to replacing recommendations #8 and #9 with a statement that the TAC will study further the intersections of Chestnut St and Mystic St, and Chestnut St and Medford St. Cost estimates will be added where TAC has such information. The intention of the recommendations is to provide flexibility to designers in the implementation. This motion authorizes the Chair to make the changes to the memo and send it to the Working Group for review. After a final version is drafted, the Chair will send the Memo to the Select Board. (It does not have to be reviewed by the full TAC.)

TAC Members voting “yes”: Dan Amstutz, Len Diggins, Captain Flynn, Ray Jones, Melissa Laube, Scott Smith, Laura Swan, and Shoji Takahashi. There were no TAC Members voting “no”. Wayne Chouinard abstained.

5. Update: Lower Washington Street Issues

Melissa Laube received unofficial guidance from APD and AFD on the possibility of changing the operation of Lower Washington St. APD and AFD were not opposed to making the street one way. AFD was opposed to closing the roadway to automobile traffic. The Working Group will no longer consider the option of closing the roadway to vehicular traffic.

The Working Group will send its draft memo to DPW and will update the abutters. The reactions of DPW and the abutters will inform how to move forward with technical analysis of the options.

6. Update: Mass Ave at Appleton St.

Dan Amstutz informed the TAC that the Design Review Committee will meet again on May 27 at 7pm. Green International will present another design concept iteration. There is a planned test for curb extensions at the intersection.

7. Update: Speed Enforcement in Crosby St. Neighborhood

Shoji Takahashi informed TAC that a formal request was made to APD for traffic data to-be collected on Crosby St. The request usually goes to Corey Rateau, who is out on medical leave. Captain Flynn responded that APD will get the traffic counts for TAC, and to contact Lt. Pedrini.

8. Update: Mt. Gilboa Traffic Concerns

Ray Jones has scheduled a meeting with the Mt Gilboa Working Group for May 22 at 8:30am. DPW is seeking funding for a speed-feedback sign and RRFB for Lowell St near the Arlington Reservoir. Traffic counts and speed data will be requested.

9. Update: SRTS Dallin

Laura Swan indicated that Judy Crocker has discussed her arrival/dismissal recommendations for the Dallin School with Officer Corey Rateau. There is a discussion of a pilot plan for the bus-only zone to examine the impact on traffic circulation. Crocker needs greater direction from TAC on what may be possible for the Dallin School to implement. Dallin is interested in a fall implementation, beginning the next school year.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.